NEWS CONFERENCE

WITH

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JAMES R. SCHLESINGER

AT THE PENTAGON

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1974 - 11 AM (EDT)

SECRETARY SCHLESINGER: Gentlemen, I believe that the framework for agreement at Vladivostok continues to excite some interest, so I should like to underscore the fact that from the standpoint of the Department of Defense the framework agreement at Vladivostok, which will go into further detailed negotiations before the final agreement is signed, is a major step forward. It is a diplomatic achievement for the President. It requires that both sides accept a numerical limit on the number of strategic delivery vehicles deployed and it will entail some reduction in what we have assumed to be the Soviet program. It has the advantage of including all strategic delivery vehicles in the agreement and thus moves beyond the SALT I agreement of 1972.

Q: Mr. Secretary, you said in the past that it is important to restrict Soviet missile throw-weight to insure equality of strategic forces. But the new agreement, as I understand it, puts no limit on the Soviet throw-weight, nor on the number of large yield MIRVs the Russians could deploy. Does that mean the new agreement leaves the United States at a potentially dangerous disadvantage?

A: The agreement itself does not leave the United States at a potential disadvantage. The framework of this agreement calls for equality. It was the President's objective in going to Vladivostok to assure that the agreement signed would be an equal one and that it would not be, as some have characterized the initial SALT agreement, as an unequal agreement. The agreement fulfills the objectives of the joint resolution of Congress and in particular what has been called the Jackson Amendment, that urges the President to seek a future treaty which would not limit the United States to levels of intercontinental strategic forces inferior to the limits provided for the Soviet Union. That objective has been obtained.

The issue of throw-weight is a complex issue and it deals with the question of arms stability, rather than the issue of equality or arms balance. We have been concerned about the growth of throw-weight, and in particular, of MIRV throw-weight. But the treaty or the pending treaty in no way constrains the United States to a position of inequality. The agreement that was reached at Vladivostok provides what is essential for the United States and that is retention of arms balance. The growth of MIRV throw-weight creates a potential problem of instability, particularly with regard to land based missile forces, but there is no inequality in accordance with the question that was raised.

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Q: Could you tell us with respect to this potential difference in throw-weight and the potential impact that it would have on land based missiles, your view of what the U.S. strategic forces will look like several years from now as a result of this agreement? In other words, now that we know how many MIRVed missiles the Soviets will be allowed, do you think that we will now move to put more of our missiles at sea, to make them mobile either on land or air so that they are less vulnerable to attack? What changes do you see forthcoming in the U.S. strategic forces?

A: I think that is a difficult question to answer. There is an aspect of the agreement reached at Vladivostok that before 1980, we will enter into further negotiations with regard to the reductions of force. So the outcome with regard to composition of U.S. forces would depend upon any further developments in that area. If one assumes that the 2400 limit continues to apply, the results would be that an increasing share of U.S. forces would indeed move to sea and there would be a larger number of bombers than had previously been anticipated, so that the share of the total represented by ICBMs would be reduced. In addition to that, as I have mentioned I think on a number of previous occasions, the concern for the stability problem as represented by the momentum of the Soviet program implies that we shall -- as this question implies -- have to re-examine the basing concepts for our strategic forces. We shall retain the ICBMs in the total force structure for the foreseeable future. Did you ask something about cost?

Q: No, I didn't, but please go ahead.

A: I think there is at least the implication with regard to the cost question which comes from the issue of whether the immediate future to which you referred implies a different force structure. Basically, we will continue to move ahead with the program that has been the Department's program in the Five Year Defense Plan. There will be little impact on costs in FY '76, save on to compensate for inflation. Further out, there will be some upward adjustment of costs associated with the modernization program as the new bombers are brought in to replace the B-52s and that the procurement costs associated with that will be added to the procurement costs of the Trident.

Q: Mr. Secretary, do you believe that throw-weight, or megatonnage, or nuclear explosive power, whatever you want to call it, is a phony issue, and do you think, on the other hand, while the United States under this agreement would have the right to increase its megatonnage, that the political realities in Congress and in the country today would allow that kind of huge extra expenditure?

A: I am convinced, and from all of my readings of the polls, the American public wishes to remain second to none. And a substantial share of the American public, if you test them, prefers to be superior. But the overwhelming bulk of the American public continues to wish to be second to none. I think that the shrinking resources available to the Department of Defense represent an issue that has

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not yet been adequately conveyed to the American public. But when that issue is framed for the American public, I have no doubt what the outcome will be. There may be difficulties in any one fiscal year or any program year, but over the course of a decade or more, the American public and the United States will not consent to a position of being second to anyone else.

The first part of your question: I think that you may refer to the phrase that was employed by a high State Department source on a background basis, so let me deal with that problem. The rudiments of that are indicated by my previous answers. I think that Dr. Kissinger has been appropriately concerned about the misunderstanding of the throw-weight issue, that the 1972 agreement was attacked because of the throw-weight issue as if that agreement in some way constrained the throw-weight decisions regarding the United States forces. In addition, the throw-weight issue is not related to the arms balance issue, or the issue of equality, or the issue of superiority as has been stated in a number of editorials that I have seen. In that respect, it is an issue that has been inappropriately used in that context and I think that is the concern that Dr. Kissinger has had.

As I have just indicated, however, the throw-weight issue is important with regard to the stability of forces. And incidentally, it is important with regard to the gross expenditures of both sides with regard to the overall strategic forces on both sides. The growth of MIRVed ICBM throw-weight, as I have mentioned before, creates problems for the United States with regard to the suitability of the past basing concepts that we have employed. We can, however, continue to match the Soviet Union. In that respect, the throw-weight argument, I think, has been used in a misleading fashion.

Q: If I understood the President's message correctly and perhaps I did not, but if I did, I thought he said except for the increasing dollars resulting from inflation, our strategic weaponry will in constant dollars be the same. I understood you to say just a few moments ago that it would be an upward adjustment of costs associated with the program. Would you clear that up, please?

A: Yes, I think that there are a number of aspects of that question. As I indicated earlier, I think the President was referring to the immediate effects which will not be any significantly different from the effects of inflation and that in addition we will be abiding by the Five Year Defense Plan that we have previously provided. Generally speaking, the question is confused by the issue of what base year one is employing, and it is also made somewhat ambiguous by the inclusion of allocated costs of direct support.

The figure that was used the other night in the questioning of President Ford was the figure of $18 billion. Eighteen billion dollars is a figure that was put together by the Brookings Institution. It includes an allocated share of indirect costs, support costs. As you know, the allocation of indirect costs is an arbitrary allocation, and depending on the conventions that

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employed -- the accounting conventions, any figure from $13 billion to $18 billion roughly would be defensible. I think it was in the context of that discussion, of the $18 billion total, that the President indicated that we should not expect overall costs for the strategic program to rise significantly.

With regard to the direct costs, I would point out that the direct costs, in constant dollars, are now about one-third of what they were in the period from FY '56 to FY '63. In that period of time, which included the apprehension of the missile gap and the disposal of the missile gap, the expenditures by the United States were three times as large as they presently are. At this point, FY '75, we are at an historical low with regard to expenditures on strategic forces. We are down by some 25 percent, for example, from FY '70. So there is a question of the base and there is a question of what share of indirect support costs should be included. The President's statement related to the $18 billion and I think that we would not expect, if you use that as a figure, any substantial increase in the costs of strategic forces.

Q: Mr. Secretary, in our remarks before, did you mean to give an implied go-ahead for the B-1 bomber?

A: No, sir, I said a bomber follow-on, or words to that effect. As I indicated in my comments at the B-1 rollout, there are still many technical assessments that must be made of the B-1 prior to the time that we would take a firm procurement decision.

Q: Except that costs would go up as (inaudible) new bombers to replace the B-52?

A: That is because we are producing no bombers today and whether we produce the B-1 or whether we produce some other aircraft, the procurement costs must rise.

Q: We will produce a new bomber then?

A: We must produce a new bomber.

Q: Mr. Secretary, the President said at his news conference that the issue of adding to U.S. land based missile throw-weight is really up to the military planners. I ask you now, at this point do you see any necessity for increasing the size of the U.S. land based missile forces in terms of throw-weight? In other words, do you envision a necessity for a larger missile than the Minuteman III?

A: That in part depends on the pacing of Soviet developments. We have a cap on their program, but we will watch very carefully what develops in the actual deployment program of the Soviet Union. We have, as you know, been doing studies on the MX during the course of this fiscal year and we have some R&D money going into the MX at this point. The development of the MX will proceed in FY '76. We will be doing the R&D on that in contingency preparation either for deployment of a larger missile in the present silos or the use of that missile in a mobile mode.

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Q: Mr. Secretary, you have said and Dr. Currie said that we can expect a deployment of Russian MIRVs early next year. Do you still expect the Russians to put new MIRVs in place early next year?

A: They will be deploying their first MIRV missiles we expect in the first quarter of 1975.

Q: Can you say now whether you will attempt to reach the total of the 2400 ceiling in delivery vehicles?

A: Our problem, I think, if you look at the defense program, is not to reach 2400 but to make downward adjustments from our force structure towards 2400. We have more than sufficient to reach that ceiling in the existing programs of the Department. As you know, there are 1710 missiles allowed by the 1972 treaty, including Titan, Minuteman, Polaris and Poseidon. To that we add the present program of 240 Trident missiles by 1985, which gives you a total of 1950. We have approximately 450 B-52s in the fleet at the present time and the present program incorporates 241 B-1s for a grand total of 2641, if my arithmetic is correct. So we will have to be drawing down on the B-52 inventory in order to reach a number of 2400.

Q: Mr. Secretary, in view of your forthcoming visit to Europe, will you comment please on the recent British defense cut worldwide and especially the British decision to pull out almost entirely from any commitments east of Suez? Would you also comment on a report in a London newspaper that has you saying, "We can no longer expect the British to pull any weight" in defense matters.

A: I think that we are delighted to note that in the course of the U.K. review, the British Army of the Rhine has not been touched, that the British government has decided to adhere to the NATO commitment in its entirety. There is no reduction in the British commitment on the central front. With regard to the U.K. commitments on a broader basis, some of them reflected British foreign policy objectives which are unilateral objectives, some of them reflected what I believe the government of the U.K. regards as vestigial responsibilities of the Empire. We regret, of course, a shrinkage of what the U.K. regards as its global as opposed to its NATO responsibilities. But that is a decision that the British government must take. With regard to the NATO commitment, of course, that will be discussed within the NAC and within the appropriate organs of NATO.

Q: What about the comment attributed to you in the paper where you said you could no longer expect the British to pull any weight in defense matters?

A: I think that as I have indicated the British represent a substantial component of NATO, and that they will continue, as this defense review shows, to perform a major role within NATO and that will be continuing. I think that the global role of Great Britain as indicated by the nature of the defense cuts will shrink so that there will be lesser British weight felt east of Suez.

Q: Mr. Secretary, does not the British cutback impact on our situation? In other words, as I understand it, the Royal Navy will

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be cut back quite a bit. It seems to me this would put an added burden on ASW for the United States Navy. Do you see it that way or not?

A: Any reduction of naval forces of course is something we would prefer not to have to live with. But given the political commitments -- the political situation within Britain--the adjustments have been made in such a way by the British government that they minimize their impact on the very important NATO role.

Q: Mr. Secretary, the country of Iran continues to accumulate a substantial amount of arms and there have been recent reports that there is serious consideration being given to their financing of the reopening of the C-5A production line. One, could you comment on that, whether you think the C-5A possibility is real, and secondly, whether you foresee any review of American policy which might put some limits on the amount of American arms that are sold in the general Persian Gulf area?

A: The government of Iran has expressed some interest in the possibility of C-5 procurement. That is a decision that the government of Iran of course will take on its own. We are neither encouraging or discouraging movement in that direction. We have laid out fairly clearly what the costs would be of reopening that line. At this point, I am not in a position to make any prediction with regard to the ultimate decision of the government of Iran. The decision may be to find some alternative means of improving their airlift capabilities.

The subject of arms limitation to a particular region is a very difficult subject to deal with. There are many conflicting strands of foreign policy and there are many adventitious forces that determine whether or not a particular sale should be made. As a general proposition, the United States believes it is in the interest of the United States to have close relationships with the governments of many areas. As a consequence, since arms are available from alternative sources, it is clear that the United States will continue to have on-going supply relationships with many nations in the Middle East.

Q: Mr. Secretary, some of the Middle East countries are using their oil money to buy into western industry. This happened recently with Mercedes Benz. There was an unsuccessful attempt in this country to buy into a major aircraft manufacturer -- Lockheed. How do you feel about third country nationals, and in particular the Arabs, trying to buy into key industries -- industries which could affect American defense?

A: I think the answer to that is, we would have to examine any attempt to acquire a major interest or a controling interest by another government of defense industries doing classified work for the United States Government with great caution and on a case by case basis. We would be exceedingly prudent with regard to any judgments that would be reached under those circumstances.

Q: On the missile question, is 1320 an agreeable number to you or is it more than you would have liked to have seen or less than

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you would have liked to have seen on MIRVs?

A: I think one can say this agreement has been a very major step forward, that we have come a long way, that it is a substantial improvement and provides us with a framework of equality until 1985. Of course, there are additional aspects that might have been constrained. But we must recognize that there are very great advantages in this agreement that place a numerical ceiling on the forces on both sides. These agreements do not necessarily achieve all that all parties within the United States Government might have desired, but it is a major step forward and a major accomplishment.

Q: Does that mean we get in the race for equality rather than quantity?

A: I think you use terms that I would not use.

Q: What terms would you use, sir?

A: The use of phrases like arms race and so forth, I think, are becoming the coin of the realm, but they are rather inaccurate. As I indicated earlier, we are now spending about one-third of what we spent on strategic forces compared to the period 15 years ago. Expenditures have diminished. The United States has not added to its force structure in that period of time; it has diminished the amount of megatonnage that it carries. It has reduced other elements of its forces; it has refined its forces in many ways. When one talks about qualitative improvements, one must keep in mind the many characteristics that one is concerned about. We have not -- no one has been adverse to a qualitative race that involves, for example, the hardening of silos on both sides. To improve technologies or to improve deployments, tends to stabilize the arms race, if one uses that expression.

The reason I brushed off the comment about qualitative arms race is I think we must all recognize that the consequences of the unleashing of atomic power since 1945 cannot be eliminated by phraseology, sloganeering or by a wave of the hand. There is an illusion, I believe, that somehow or another, through a wave of the wand, the United States can put aside the necessary dynamics of preserving a reasonable arms balance in a period of changing technology. Technologies will continue to change and we will continue to make adjustments. I would not refer to that as a qualitative arms race.

As you will recognize, the Soviet Union is now transforming its missile forces from a more primitive set of forces to a more advanced set of forces and that will require us to make whatever djustments are necessary. But I would underscore, arms agreements are no panacea. We cannot solve the very difficult problems of retention of arms balance and hopefully achievement of arms stability in a period of changing technology without making the necessary adjustments as the other side changes the composition of its forces.

Q: Mr. Secretary, you said this agreement will force a review of the basing system that the United States has used. Does this

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mean you are considering an extension of the Trident program beyond 10 submarines?

A: That must definitely be considered over the longer run. As you know, the Department put forward last year the proposition of a smaller submarine -- the so-called Norwal class, and the hope was that if constraint was observed on the throw-weight issue by the Soviet Union, that the United States would be in a position to reciprocate by replacing the Poseidon boats ultimately with a smaller submarine than the Trident. I think the consequence of this agreement is that we would lean in the direction of additional Tridents to replace the Poseidon, or if we wish to adjust our force structure more towards a sea based force that the nature of the sea based forces would be Trident.

Q: Mr. Secretary, you said earlier, when you were discussing the agreement, it was a major step forward. You went on to say, of course, additional aspects that might have been constrained. What I would like to ask you is --

A: Might conceptually have been constrained. As I have indicated, the President achieved a diplomatic breakthrough, and for anybody who was aware of the previous negotiating history in this area, the President must be given great credit for this agreement. It does not necessarily achieve everything that everybody would desire.

Q: Nevertheless, I would like to come back to the things that might have been constrained.

A: Might conceptually have been constrained.

Q: Do you believe the United States, across the board in all matters dealing with the Soviet Union -- trade, technology -- had the leverage to produce an agreement with considerably lower levels of MIRVed missiles or were the Soviets adamant on having this kind of level?

A: I believe the Soviets have been quite firm with regard to the program that they had embarked upon. This has been demonstrated repeatedly in the negotiation process. Given the fact they had developed the missiles and defined a program -- and there was considerable momentum behind that program -- that the likelihood of their turning away was limited at best, it would have required a very high risk program by the United States to achieve any change in the nature of that program assuming that it could have been achieved. On balance, the judgment is the outcome of arms balance and equal aggregates is sufficient a result for the United States so that we can go ahead with the type of agreement that was reached at Vladivostok.

Q: How did you get to the 1320? We were told on the one hand, the Soviets could have 40 percent for missiles, or something along those lines, significantly larger were it not for this agreement. So was the 1320 a suggestion of ours or theirs or how did that come about?

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A: I think it was a process of mutual accommodation, and I shall not say any more on that.

Q: Mr. Secretary, I am still going back to Mr. Hoffman's original question; I am still having trouble reconciling your earlier statements and (inaudible) statements about Soviet throw-weight potential with your current position. Is what you are saying, in the past you were concerned about the Soviet throw-weight, not because you thought it presented a real threat of eliminating our Minuteman force?

A: Certainly not.

Q: But it could lead to perceptions of inequality?

A: No, it is a physical problem; it is a military problem. It is not a problem of perception. I think you might go back and examine the previous comments I have made. If I may, I will attempt to review them. In the 1972 agreement, the United States possessed certain technological advantages that permitted us to absorb a handicap with regard to numbers and implicitly, though not stated in that agreement, with regard to throw-weight. Throw-weight was not a serious problem at that time, or so seriously a problem at that time because the Soviets lacked the technologies then available to the United States. As long as the interim agreement lasts, until 1977, we are not in a serious position. As I have indicated to you, the growth of MIRVed ICBM capability with these improved technologies is a serious problem for the United States and that we must make adjustments. As I have indicated to you, we cannot control the Soviet program save through the negotiation process and our ability to influence it, while not small, is not unlimited.

I have said that we would prefer the Soviets constrain their deployment, particularly with regard to throw-weight, and that it would have been from an arms stability aspect a preferable outcome. But I have repeatedly stated that we are prepared to match whatever the Soviets do. One must distinguish clearly between the character of the Soviet program and the SALT Agreement. The SALT Agreement is limited in its ability to constrain the Soviet Union. It is the character of the Soviet program that has caused concern. We have a major accomplishment with regard to placing the lid on the numerical characteristics of the Soviet force.

If both sides had seen the advantage in restraining adequately MIRVed ICBM throw-weight, or MIRVed throw-weight, that would have contributed to arms stability, but that is not something that we could accomplish unilaterally. You have all heard that politics is the art of the possible. Diplomacy is the art of the possible. Arms control is the art of the possible. An agreement is a major step forward. It is not the achievement of Utopia.

Q: Mr. Secretary, you have said that if the Soviets would constrain their buildup of MIRVed throw-weight, that would contribute to stability and might allow us to do some adjustments, presumably downward.

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Let me ask you this. If the Soviets should MIRV 1,320 land based missiles, as permitted under the treaty in principle agreed to last week, would the United States then feel it necessary to increase the throw-weight of its land based missile force?

A: You mean its ICBM force?

Q: Yes, sir.

A: The answer to that is, as I've indicated, unclear. We are moving ahead with the development of a larger throw-weight missile that could be deployed into the silos or could be used in a mobile mode depending upon our assessment of the changes in the Soviet program.

In the circumstances that you specify, it is plain that there would be considerable risk to the ICBM force and that one would have to consider very carefully adjustments of our force posture by introducing new basing modes.

Q: Were you surprised, as Secretary Kissinger was, by the reaction on the Hill to this agreement, coming from both conservatives and liberals, the negative reaction?

A: I think that some of that reaction reflects the fact that parties who expressed reservations were not immersed in the negotiating process; that they did not know what fell within the realm of the possible and what represented a high risk diplomatic position. The President must make a judgment as to nailing down positive achievements as opposed to risking those positive achievements in the quest for something more.

I think I have answered that question in part previously, in that there has been an illusion that somehow through the wave of a wand that these problems of retaining an arms balance are going to go away. And there is some disappointment on the part of those who would like to think the defense problems are receding or can recede and the fact this was not a panacea.

On the other side of the spectrum, I must confess to a greater degree of surprise, in that, this agreement achieves the hardcore requirement as specified in the joint resolution that the United States would not be limited to levels of intercontinental strategic forces inferior to the limits provided for the Soviet Union. That all of the major criticisms directed toward the 1972 agreement, whether justified or unjustified, have been corrected by this agreement.

There is, I think, some inconsistency for those who fear that the Soviet Union may be seeking superiority, if not world domination, to be surprised that the Soviet armaments program is not sufficiently plastic that it can be adjusted simply in a negotiating process. If the Soviets are bent on superiority, the limitations of the United States in the negotiating process become larger rather than smaller.

Q: Why isn't this clear to somebody like Senator Jackson?

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He certainly follows this very closely.

A: I would not care to develop any judgments on this matter for Senator Jackson because Senator Jackson is well qualified to speak for himself.

I think that it is fair to say there are individuals who saw more latitude for imposing additional constraint and that they may have believed very strongly in those possibilities and they might have been prepared to risk more and risk the achievements of this agreement in the quest for that additional level of constraint. The balance that has been struck by the President, I believe, is a judicious balance and has had the steady support of the Department of Defense.

Q: There was a war scare in the Middle East just as they took off for Vladivostok. What is your reading of the situation there now as far as military problems and outbreak of war?

A: I think that the tensions have diminished substantially since that period of alert and mobilization and that at the present time, the situation is quite calm in the Middle East.

Q: Mr. Secretary, may I ask you if you will tell us in so many words, can the Soviet Union with 1320 MIRVed missiles put our land base force at risk?

I believe you danced around the question of whether you liked 1320 or not and I would appreciate it if you could tell us if that is higher than you wanted?

A: There are no clear-cut answers to that question. As I've indicated before, at the present time neither side has available to it a high confidence counterforce capability, even against the ICBM component of the overall strategic force structure of the other side. It would have been preferable if we could have stayed in that position on both sides. Obviously, improvements of accuracy, additional MIRVs, improvements in warheads which are being introduced into the Soviet force structure increase the lethality of individual RVs against ICBM silos, and this is a question of degree. The greater the lethality as anticipated, the greater is the risk to our Minuteman force.

But I reiterate, no one will know what the operational accuracies of their ICBM force will be; neither side can know that, save in those unhappy circumstances that deterrents seek to avoid. No one will be able to have a high confidence in accuracy as a result simply of tests at a missile range.

Q: Mr. Secretary, does the United States have any evidence that the Soviet Union has violated, is violating, or may be preparing to violate the terms of the SALT I treaty or the interim agreement?

A: There is no conclusive evidence of any violations. There are, as the President indicated the other evening, a number of ambiguities and there is an established procedure for dealing with those ambiguities through the Standing Consultative Commission. We shall be raising a number of questions in that Standing

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Consultative Commission in January. So there are ambiguities, but there is no conclusive evidence of violation.

Q: When you say conclusive, do you mean there is some evidence?

A: What I've said is that there are ambiguities here and that suggests that there are developments that must be further reviewed.

Q: Do you see problems in verifying the limit on MIRVs? How do we know they are abiding by the 1320?

A: I think that there are inherent problems in verification. What I believe is by the time this agreement is prepared for final signature, that we will have satisfied ourselves that we have a verification procedure that gives us the requisite degree of confidence that any significant violation will be detected.

Of course, the possibility of a small numerical violation may exist, but it would not be significant. What we are seeking in the verification procedure is a requisite degree of confidence that any significant violation could be rapidly detected.

Q: Mr. Secretary, if my arithmetic is correct, this 1320 seems to represent the tally of the Soviet Union's SS-17, 18, 19 capability with MIRVs. I am referring to the modification of the SS-11s and SS-9s. They have about 1323 if I am not mistaken.

This does not look like any part of restraint on the part of the Soviet Union. You were asking for this restraint earlier this year and you said if we did not get this kind of restraint, you would have to scale up. Are you now saying if they do move into this area, MIRVing all of their MIRV capabilities, the United States will have to, in turn, go into throw-weights and try to match them in that same area?

A: We are going to match them overall. As I've indicated before, one is not attempting to mirror image the Soviet forces which have deficiencies, by the way. The restraint on both sides would have been mutually advantageous and would have been as advantageous or more advantageous from the Soviet standpoint than from our own.

However, we will have to adjust our overall force structure. That does not mean mirror imaging throw-weight. It does mean the overall composition of our forces must maintain essential equivalence with those of the Soviet Union. I have indicated that a six to one disadvantage in as critical an area as ICBMs have been in the past is not something that we would regard as a trivial difference. We can obviously live with lesser differences in throw-weight. We will be proceeding with a number of developments, that I outlined earlier, that are part of our program and the probability of deployment has increased.

In addition to that, of course, the overall forces of the United States in the strategic area will be larger than they would

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otherwise have been. The Department has urged repeatedly that we have reductions of strategic forces. We hope the negotiations on that matter that will start before 1980 will be successful. If they are not successful, we will have a larger number of strategic delivery vehicles than we had previously assumed.

Q: Looking ahead, Mr. Secretary, do you anticipate that the Soviet Union will try to merge all of those 1323 land based MIRVs or will they try to move into the SLBM area?

A: I would assume the latter. That is a very difficult prediction to make, however, I would assume the Soviet Union will attempt to MIRV some component of their SLBM force. To whatever extent that they do that, they will be drawing down on the potential number of MIRVed ICBMs.

Q: Mr. Secretary, you have made clear the United States intends to continue to sell weapons to those countries it deems profitable, that it deems in the national interest to sell to. You, and others, have also made clear there appears to be a lessening of tensions in the Middle East. Is any thought being given at your level, sir, to withholding or limiting or somehow slowing down, weaponry shipments as a means of achieving the diplomatic ends, as a means of coaxing any of the potential warring parties in the Middle East to a settlement?

A: Of course that possibility is one that has been repeatedly explored. The main point that one must keep in mind is that the United States does not have unilateral control of weapons shipments to the Middle East. There are a number of other suppliers, rather vigorous suppliers. As a consequence, just as I indicated before there are no panaceas in the strategic arms area, even in this area of regional arms competition, there is no panacea that can be provided by the United States. The United States has far less leverage in this area than it has in the area of strategic arms in which there is only one other serious power.

Q: Secretary Kissinger I believe enunciated the principle if the Soviets deployed one type of MIRV missiles, we assume all missiles of that type were MIRVed. If they deploy the SS-19 to replace the 11 and the SS-18 to replace the 9, aren't we at the 1300 limit right there? And you said, we assume they would deploy MIRV SLBMs; would not that put them over the limit?

A: There are intricacies in the verification process into which I cannot go at the present time. But what we are saying is that if the combination of silo and achieved missile tests are such that we would have reason to suspect that a MIRVed missile has been placed in a particular hole, we will assume that it has been placed there.

Q: If they MIRV the SLBMs and MIRV the 18's and 19's --

A: If they convert all their SS-11 silos under those circumstances, we would assume they have been converted for some purpose.

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Q: Would not they be over the limit?

A: I was addressing to the verification problem. If, indeed, they did convert all of their silos to the new configuration and if indeed there was a procedure with SLBM deployment -- and those are two big ifs -- then the conclusion would be that they had exceeded 1320.

Q: Earlier when you were adding up the numbers, it seemed you were saying, or adding the Trident missile total to the Polaris and Poseidon missile total, does that mean you have now decided the first ten Tridents would not replace the Polaris, that the Polaris will be kept in the fleet longer than had earlier been thought? And secondly, what about the retrofitting of Trident missiles into Polaris and Poseidon boats?

A: The ten Polaris boats, the older boats, will be retained in the force for their foreseeable lifetime, given the higher level, the highest ceilings associated with this agreement. I would say that as a reasonable and probable outcome although we have not reached any final conclusions on that. The intent continues to be to go ahead and deploy the Trident I missile into the Poseidon boats. The Polaris boats would not receive the Trident I missile; they cannot receive the Poseidon missile.

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